

NEWINGTON TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

May 13, 2020

Zoom Webinar/Meeting

I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Commissioners Present

Chairman Domenic Pane

Commissioner Michael Fox

Commissioner Garrett Havens

Commissioner David Lenares

Commissioner Stanley Sobieski

Commissioner Hyman Braverman-A

Commissioner Thomas Gill-A

Commissioner Bryan Haggerty-A

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Anthony Claffey

Commissioner Stephen Woods

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

a. No Changes

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (For items not listed on the agenda; speakers limited to two minutes Use the Zoom "Raise Hand" function)

Chairman Pane: If there is anyone from the public who happens to be on Zoom?

James Krupinski: There are two individuals who have raised their hands, so with your permission Mr. Chairman, I'll have the first person speak.

Gail Budrejko, 21 Isabelle Terrace: I know tonight you are going to be discussing, which I think is wonderful the outdoor restaurant seating, but the Executive Order also mentions allowing retail businesses to get on the first track permission to sell retail goods on sidewalks, or other outdoor areas, including shared spaces or spaces provided by the municipality, so I was wondering if you would consider or if you would look to accommodate any retailers because we have a lot small businesses in town that might not be able to fully reopen due to space limitations or whatever, or even some of our larger retailers who might want to do this, so I was just wondering if that would be considered in addition to restaurants, assuming that these retail establishments could get some sales outside as long as they comply with social distancing.

Domenic Pane
Town Clerk

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We need to send a message to all businesses that if there is something that we can do and they need outside areas or something for the retail space, I agree with you. We can try to accommodate them anyway that we can. I think that the difficult thing is getting the word out to everybody. We need to work closely with our business community in order to keep it thriving. I agree with you,
Do we have somebody else?

James Karpinski: We do, the next individual who is looking, you are now live. Please state your name and address for the record.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: As I was thinking about what I had to say I think I answered my own question, but maybe I will say what I had to say. Is it correct, my understanding that blight and the zoning violations are two separate matters? If so, my concerns are on the letters that have been going out regarding blighted property, so I think that would probably be best addressed with the Town Manager and I did address it with the Town Council last night. So it was a little good lesson for me learning how to get in on the Zoom meeting, thank you very much. I hope you all are well, stay safe, and I'll be watching. Thank you.

Chairman Pane: Thank you Rose. We do have I think Andrew on, if he wants to explain the difference between the two.

Rose Lyons: I know the difference between the two, and when I saw the zoning enforcement officer on the agenda tonight, my question was going to be, and I probably should ask it anyway, I've always had a problem with not being able to speak on agenda items and I just maybe would like some clarification. Do you consider an agenda item his report, the Town Planner's report, or is it just applications that you refer to?

Chairman Pane: I have flexibility on that, you can speak about anything that you would like.

Rose Lyons, Okay, that's it then. Thank you very much.

Chairman Pane: Thank you Rose. Is there anybody else from the public?

James Karpenski: We have one more individual, they are indicated as C-A-R-A.

Cara Santoro: Hi, this is Cara Santoro, my first name is spelled C-A-R-A. The first thing I want to point out is that in the last meeting, in the notes and I was quoted when you printed out the agenda as Carla, that's not my name, but a lot of people make that mistake. It was also, I was quoted as saying I think we should look around Newington for some more TOD areas for low income or moderate income housing. I never said that. I am opposed to putting it at Newington Junction. I brought up all of the places where we already have it, the two bordering towns, parts of West Hartford that have it, and I finished by saying let's care about the current homeowners and residents of this town and stay the moratorium on affordable housing. So, as another neighbor said it so beautifully, give us a reason for wanting to live in this town. That is exactly what I said, and I'm really upset that I was misquoted as if I was for the agenda that some people are trying to push forward.

Chairman Pane: Where were you quoted in that?

Cara Santoro: If you look in like the meeting notes, I looked on line to see what the meeting notes were from last time....

Chairman Pane: Do you have the date? If you could get the date we could make a correction I believe, right Craig?

Cara Santoro: I can probably get it to you before this ends, but yes, I could do that.

Chairman Pane: If you don't do it before this ends, call the Town Planner and give him the correction and the date and we will get it on our agenda, and we will correct it for you.

Cara Santoro: Okay, I appreciate that. I'm also still concerned about Newington Junction. It's not like the other two areas where you want to create a TOD zone. This is comprised of single family homes, some that are over a hundred years old, and the other areas don't abut residential zones like the Myra Cohen way and the proposed train station. Both of those are basically undeveloped or in a stage of development. The Junction again is more residential than Industrial, and one of the business, West Hill Automotive which has been there for years, and has a few residential houses and I remember correctly DOT wanted to put a railroad stop there but that was changed due to the fact that they couldn't accommodate the parking area and it was so far away from major expressways. Over the last few months, there has been a big push by several members of elected boards to try to force, to move the train station back to this location when the State already said no. The Town is already inundated with huge volumes of traffic on both sides of the town roads. Being here over thirty years, I am opposed to any major development in this area that would destroy the neighborhood. In a small town like this, as I said before, we don't need another TOD area plus the ones that we already have in town. So, I'm just requesting that the Commission leave Newington Junction alone, and that any new or amended zone changes be done at a later date when full public hearing can be held instead of trying to put it on like tonight, and like Commissioner Woods did with the housing moratorium, since the plans will be the basis for the next ten years, I would want a full public hearing instead of putting it on something like this. I think more of the town people need to participate, be there in person.

Chairman Pane: Thank you very much.

Cara Santoro: You're welcome.

Chairman Pane: Our next items is the Zoning Enforcement Officer report

V. ZONING OFFICER REPORT

Andrew Armstrong: Does anyone have any questions on the April 2020 ZEO report?

Chairman Pane: Andrew, before we go into questions, do you want to explain to people your procedures on what you are doing, if any complaints come in, how you are handling them, and then how you are handling blight and also I think we talked about certain things that you were going to be working on for possible changes to the regulations to make it a little easier on certain parking requirements and things like that. If you could hit on that a little bit for the Commission I'd appreciate it.

Andrew Armstrong: Blight is actually totally separate from Zoning, but I will say for both types of complaints right now I'm going out and speaking to people first trying to have a face to face conversation with people of course using social distancing and the proper precautions. In addition to that we are looking into working on some zoning regulations changes but I believe the Commission wanted to do that at a later date. For the time being we are kind of temporary hold for zoning violations, but we are going out and speaking to people resolving it that way if possible, and keeping a record of what is coming in. If there is something that is really egregious, then we will discuss it with Chairman Pane and decide if it is something that needs to be addressed for safety or otherwise.

Chairman Pane: Okay, very good. Thank you very much. Are there any questions from the Commissioners?

VI. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

None

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

None

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Pane: We have TPZ minutes from April 6th and April 22nd, regular meetings.

Commissioner Fox moved to accept the minutes of April 6th and April 22nd. The motion was seconded by Garrett Havens.

Commissioner Sobieski: I thought the lady just said there was an issue with one of the minutes of the meetings. We can't approve both of them.

Craig Minor: Chairman Pane, I noticed that she said the meeting notes, not the minutes, so I think there was something in the agenda packet that she read on line something that she said, but I don't think it was the minutes that she was speaking about. That was just my impression.

Commissioner Sobieski: I thought it was right here, Planning and Development minutes here.

Glenn Chalder: I'm looking back at the minutes from the February public informational meeting, the one on February 26th, and I believe that Ms. Santoro is, her name is misspelled on page 6 of those minutes, so if that helps the Commission at all, I think the corrections to her name would be in the February 26th meeting minutes on page 6.

Chairman Pane: I think the best thing to do Commissioners would be to approve these and then if the woman contacts the Planner then the Planner will get the detailed information on which minutes need to be corrected and then and then we can always go back and correct the minutes.

Commissioner Sobieski: That's fine with me.

The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

a. New Plan of Conservation and Development

Glenn Chalder: Good evening, it's nice to see you. I don't think any of us thought it would be quite this long before we got back together again, you may recall we had a public informational meeting in February in regard to the draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development. There were a number of comments received at that meeting and also a few following in terms of correspondence. I put together a chart of public meeting comments, hopefully you have that at your disposal and I'd like to treat this with your approval as sort of a consent addenda. There are a number of comments that I think are not policy oriented and improve and enhance the plan and I have identified those as change recommended, and all of these comments are numbered so if anybody doesn't have it, just speak up and we can go through them one by one.

There are some other comments that were made that I think were already addressed in the POCD so in the column on the right, I have identified those as deemed necessary with a question mark for the Commission. I think based on our prior discussions that issue may have already been addressed. Then there are some other issues that I have identified as TPZ discuss and these are things that were brought up at the public meeting that either asked the Commission to change the information that is in the POCD or it's a policy decision on the part of the Commission and for me to help you by incorporating your thoughts and wishes into the POCD.

Does everybody have this chart at their disposal? Does it sound familiar?

Chairman Pane: Yes, everyone should have it in their packet.

Commissioner Fox: I might get mine today, my mail doesn't come until about five or six. I'm on the town web site, so I'm okay.

Glenn Chalder: Mr. Chairman, with you permission, what I would like to do is walk through really quickly the Chapter by Chapter the various comments that were made and get some guidance from the Commission on how to proceed. Does that sound reasonable?

Chairman Pane: Yes it does.

Glenn Chalder: Some general overall comment, people noted that the Table of Contents doesn't have Chapter Numbers in there, and we used those through the Plan and they asked that those be added. They also asked that page numbers be put on the map pages so that we could refer to them, we numbered pages before and after them but nothing on the map pages. With your consent I would propose to make those changes, and then there

were some general comments about people liked the POCD identified areas where development should occur and felt it was a good POCD overall. So those are the general comments. Does that sound good?

Chairman Pane: I don't have a problem with that. How about the other Commissioners?

Commissioner Sobieski: I have no problem with it.

Commissioner Fox: Okay.

Glenn Chalder: The next three chapters in the plan, the Introduction, Conditions and Trends, and Natural Resources no comments were made in regards to those items. With regard to the Open Space Chapter a comment was made at the meeting that they liked the concept of open space connections and creating a network and suggested that specific properties be identified for preservation and I think Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Commission that has already referenced in Action Step Number Two on page 28, so I don't think any additional change is necessary there, unless the Commission wanted to strengthen that language in some way, shape or form. My comment is no change necessary, question mark.

Chairman Pane: That is referenced in there, the trails that you are speaking about, where the trails would go, what properties and everything, so I think that is all in there. Any Commissioner questions up to now? Okay, proceed Glenn.

Glenn Chalder: No comments on Chapter Five, Community Character or Chapter Six, Sustainability/Resiliency. So that is the first page of the report, now we are on to page two. The first portion of the top is Chapter Seven, relating to Newington Town Center and there was some concern expressed that since Cedar Street carries such a high volume of traffic, that trying to encourage a village type development might be a bit of a challenge and wondered how this could be addressed. In the Plan, it recommends a public participatory process often times referred to as a Charette and I think that is exactly the type of issue that could be discussed as part of that process. I'm not sure that we need to say any more here, and that is why I identified it as no change necessary. How does the Commission feel about that?

Commissioner Sobieski: Fine with me.

Commissioner Fox: Agreed.

Chairman Pane: Sounds good.

Glenn Chalder: Chapter Eight, this is the Opportunity Areas/Sites, there are a number of comments that were brought up and I have a number of notations here in the margin for some guidance from the Commission as how you would like to proceed. The first comment which I think the Commission hear reiterated this evening in the public comment section was with regard to the Newington Junction area. There was concern expressed about development which might affect existing homes, reduce the industrial zoning, reduce tax revenue, bring more traffic or otherwise change the character of the area. I think that as Newington looks to the future for ways to improve the tax base, or

address the opportunities presented by transit, Newington Junction is an area which could accommodate some change. I don't think anybody is talking about a dramatic change in the character of the area, but it is an area that identifies as having opportunity, so that is why we chose the phrase, opportunity site. I look for guidance from the Commission as to how you might want to modify or change the language that is on page 51 of the draft of the POCD.

Commissioner Sobieski: My concern down there is that it is mostly residential as the lady said earlier and to start going in there and making a lot of changes would really upset the people in there. My concern would be to try to leave that area alone. The other two areas that we have thought about for TOD are not like this area. We're not abutting residential, we're not changing the character of the area. Many people have expressed the fact that if you put too much development down there you are going to increase the traffic on the local road which is going to take away the character of the area. That is what the lady I think was referring to in her comment. I understand that it is a mixed use development with Day Street being Industrial but even when Day Street was in its hey day there wasn't as much traffic as there is now because people are using it as a cut through and I'm concerned with the high speeds through there so it's something that the residents of that area are very concerned about.

Chairman Pane: I understand their concern and everything, but I think everybody would agree that what we have there now, with the landscaper and the car dealer down there is not a pleasant sight. There must be something that we can do there to be able to clean it up, maybe it's not development, maybe it's just parking for the bus area there and cleaning it up and landscaping it or something, but there has to be something that we can do to make that area nicer for the residents over in that area.

Commissioner Sobieski: Chairman Pane, I agree with you. The issue is, the train station is on historical commission records, so I don't know, that would have to be moved I guess. There is a lot of fiber optics in that area too that run the entire length of the rail line. Whatever development is in there, you have to be very careful of the fiber optics that are in there. With regard to the landscaper and the auto dealer, I don't know, I think something needs to be done in that area. That, as far as I'm concerned is an area that could be looked at, but I don't think they would want to put something with high volume traffic in there. That is my concern.

Chairman Pane: I agree with you, we don't need high volume traffic in there, you're right. It should be more of a community area and built for the community there and cleaned up and some sort of separation between Day Street and the residents. Matter of fact, a lot of the buffer area over on the other end of Day Street got destroyed, and I don't know if that has been corrected yet, but we need to protect the buffers between the residents property and the Industrial property.

Commissioner Sobieski: I went by there, and all he has done is mounded dirt and put a few arborvitae in, again, I'm assuming that either Andrew or the Town Planner is keeping an eye on. That is part of the issue in that area, people just do what they want. Those are the comments that I have heard from the residents in that area.

Commissioner Fox: Mr. Chairman, for one thing, clean up is not development and I know you are talking about the landscaper and the other commercial industrial places over there, they do need some cleaning up, but I have to agree with Commissioner Sobieski and the woman that was speaking during public participation, this is not a place for major development. As I said, I think at the last meeting, there are a lot of older homes there, as a matter of fact, there is one home owned by Matt Nelson which may be on the border line, but still, it's pre-Revolution and to increase traffic and saddle the residents with that kind of problems, I would not agree. Thank you.

Commissioner Braverman: I agree with Commissioner Sobieski.

Glenn Chalder: Mr. Chairman, I notice also that the next item on this page, item 13 on the list was a comment also brought up at the public hearing and some of the other areas that we talk about in Newington as opportunity sites were recommending a charrette which is actually a community driven process to evaluate what is possible, what is acceptable, what is desirable. For whatever reason, I'm not quite sure, that didn't get recommended for the Newington Junction area so we might have three options on the table. One of which is to leave the POCD the way that it is, the second one is with several comments seem to recommend that taking Newington Junction out as an opportunity site and then an alternative action if the Commission is interested would be to recommend a community participation to talk about what types of development, how can we clean up the sites the Commission has mentioned. Can address some of these other issues in a way that the neighborhood supports.

Commissioner Sobieski: If I remember correctly, when I first got on, at that time the Economic Development Director, Mr. Breacher, had tried to develop the entire area with putting in parks, making it look like a Blue Back Square down in that area, and that set the neighborhood off. You know, I understand where you are coming from, if there was a full transit node down there, with the rail stop, bus stop, that would make sense, but to have just a half a transit mode in there with the bus stop right now, even if you put additional parking you would have to have a shuttle bus to bring people up and over from Francis Avenue area to the other side, because nobody is going to walk straight up that grade there, it's about a four percent grade. So, I don't know the answer, I do know that at time Mr. Breacher had plans and people were all over the place with it, so you might want to see, have the neighbors meets and try to have some type of general discussion just in that area. It's only a thought.

Glenn Chalder: How do you want to proceed with page 51?

Chairman Pane: We also have the two other areas there, I mean, we have the Cedar Street one, there are no comments in here about the Cedar Street one. Is everybody comfortable turning that into a mass transit area with a 72 page regulation, TVDD, and are you comfortable destroying all our industrial property and turning it over to transit and housing. I mean, we need to talk about that too, I think.

Commissioner Sobieski: Chairman Pane, you are correct that the issue I have again is we need to be smart about what we are going to look at redeveloping. You know, the Crest

Pontiac issue there that got turned into housing I guess, I'm not one hundred percent sure what is going on there, and then we are going to lose some more Industrial area or possible area to get taxes with 3333 Berlin Turnpike. We do have most of the buildings on, that we have in the Industrial areas right now I believe are pretty much occupied, maybe a few vacant ones, but I think we have to be smart and look to the future and I think what the future would be is, we not going to have any big Fafnir or Fenn coming in here any more, but what we can look at doing is getting some small office type condos in there, or some....

Chairman Pane: The town has always been very successful in Industrial Parks for smaller businesses, so even though some of the Industrial properties are going away, the big 100,000 or 400,000 square foot places, there is a need for smaller companies wanting to have an area to build their own building. I just think that maybe the two areas, Newington Junction and the Cedar Street train station I think we need more discussion on it, and I would hate to have something in the POCD that makes it sound like we have already decided everything. Any comments from any Commissioner?

Commissioner Sobieski: Chairman Pane, I kind of think that you are dealing with three different distinct areas. You are dealing with Myra Cohen Way for instance, that's one area, and the area that is closest to that would be where the train station is going on Cedar Street. Those are both on fairly wide roads and can handle some capacity more of traffic. Not much more, but a little bit more. When you get into Newington Junction though, what are you going to do with traffic? That's the question. Now, when I grew up over there, Atrax was there, and from 5:00 to 5:15, you couldn't move, after that it was clear. It's the same thing that I have heard from people down on Dowd Street. When the factory let out, you couldn't move on Dowd Street for fifteen minutes and then it was clear. So, that's what the concern is, I think that you have to treat all three areas distinctly. You can't have one overlay for all three, that's my point.

Chairman Pane: I agree with you Stanley. Each one is a little different, they could have things that overlap, but there could be separate things because of the area. For instance, I agree with you that you don't want to drive a lot of traffic to Newington Junction, but it certainly would be nice to clean it up. Cedar Street, I don't mind having a train station over there, but I'd like to have a train station with the Industrial property. I'd hate to get rid of the Industrial property there. Am I in favor of some housing over there, yeah, I'm in favor of some housing over there. I don't think it's a wise decision for us to ruin all of our industrial property for a commuter lot.

Commissioner Braverman: I have a question now, or a statement basically. Given the fact that there is this corona virus situation going on and we're not really sure about how people are going to be working or even how much traffic will be produced, I think right now we need to take a look at what other companies are doing. Twitter just announced that their corporate headquarters, that all of their workers can work from home, so from a corporate perspective this may filter out to Connecticut as well. There may be workers not working from a corporate setting, but in their home. I think we need to evaluate what that's going to be, and I think it's really very serious now.

Commissioner Sobieski: I agree with Commissioner Braverman. I do know that the IRS has been taking, I know several people who work there, they have been having people work from home, and they are going to get rid of some of their commuting issues. So this may very well be, this virus may change some of the outlook of what we have for property usage. I'm not saying it will, it will go back, but it will never go back to where it was. As far as what you had said about commercial property, I agree with you. I don't want to see all of the commercial property go away, I had advocated with Mr. Breacher when they were talking about the rail station, I was a big advocate of putting underground parking in there, I have a reason for that. The land above it can be used for additional items, and I think that may be a negotiable point with the DOT when they do build that rail station. I think that the underground parking would be a great issue, it would get rid of the unsightly vision of all vehicles parked in there, so I think there are some things that we do need to look at in that particular area. I'm not, I know you should be able to put at least a two story garage underground, which would then make it easier for the commuters and not take all of our property above ground. Then if we wanted to put in some type of mixed use development like for instance office condos or something along those lines, a restaurant or something that can use the parking at night, that would be shared parking. That would be something to look at, in my opinion.

Chairman Pane: Thank you Commissioners. Are there any other Commissioners that have questions or comments? I see that there are three hands up.

Commissioner Lenares: I kind of agree with a lot of the Commissioners and yourself and what you are saying, and one of the recommendations that was made earlier was to put that Charette process back into the area under comment 12. I think it might alleviate some confusion where, as the Chairman said, you don't want to predetermine anything, or put in anything that is going to handcuff you in the future, but we would be keeping the public opinion, Commissioner's opinion, everything on the table for the future, and I wouldn't want to see a policy for all of the areas but rather take them individually, but we able to take them individually and not predetermine anything by using this I guess it would be the charette process going forward.

Chairman Pane: Thank you. Are there any other Commissioner comments? So Glenn, is there a way that we can, it seems like with that last comment and, is there a way to write into the regulation, into the POCD that we are still exploring how we can best utilize these three areas, that work within our community and isn't detrimental to one area, but a general statement or something that the Commission is still working on it but we are in favor of some development if it is correct.

Glenn Chalder: I think that at the present time, on page 51 there is a land use strategy listed and the first thing it says is consider establishing an overlay zone which will enable...and I can understand why the residents might be concerned about that. Sounds like a proactive step towards changing the zoning, and I think that, and it could have been Gail Budrejko back at the meeting in February who brought up comment number 13, and suggested the charette process. So what I would do, with your permission, is to delete strategy one, on that page, talk about the importance of a charette type process, to investigate, and I do think of all of the opportunity areas in sight, Newington Junction might

be the most modest of all of them. So the map, which is currently on page 53 right now shows similarly sized circles for Newington Center, Cedar Street the TVDD area and Newington Junction and it would seem to me that Newington Junction is smaller and we should make those circles smaller and also under 51 talk about the importance of a neighborhood driven process, a Charette type process to investigate what if any opportunities there might be, so rather than leave an impression that we have come to a conclusion to leave the door open over the next decade to investigate any opportunities that may exist there, so I think that would be my recommendation.

Chairman Pane: I think that sounds pretty good. Do any of the other Commissioners have any comments concerning what Glenn just spoke about.

Commissioner Sobieski: I have no issues with that.

Chairman Pane: Everybody else is okay with it? I think it sounds good. I'm going to ask this resident who has her hand up if she would like to speak and ask a question.

Resident: Thank you, with everyone talking they answered the question that I had so I appreciate it.

Chairman Pane: Okay, very good, thank you.

All right Glenn, if there is no objection from the Commissioners I think that is a good way, and if you want to proceed I'd appreciate it.

Glenn Chalder: I will take care of that Mr. Chairman. Just to inform the Commission, I think if the Commission is comfortable the next step for us would be to schedule a public hearing some time down the road. There are two ways that we can do that. I can make these changes and we go to public hearing with it, or I can make these changes and the Commission gets to look at it one more time. So we will talk about that at the end of the meeting, but I didn't want you to think tonight that you were making a change to the Plan, we're changing ideas for further discussion at the public hearing.

I think everyone at the meeting recognized the need for economic development in Newington. The plans promotes economic development and we had a discussion towards the end of the meeting on comment 17 which is that perhaps Newington should aspire to a 3-5 percent grand list growth in town to try to keep taxes down, higher than that even so that taxes can go down. My thought process here for comment 17 is that I wouldn't suggest that the Commission adopt an action step to do that because that is almost too hard. As Commissioner Braverman pointed out, some of the changes that may be happening in the economy overall, but I think having a specific numeric goal, that our goal as part of the POCD is urge economic development to achieve a 3 to 5 percent grand list could be an important statement. How does the Commission feel about that?

Commissioner Sobieski: What is the average going up every year, I mean in other towns that you have worked in? Is it 3 to 5, or is it more or less.

Glenn Chalder: Every community is different, the ebb and flow of the economy, location dependence, change, the ways that things move. Some, as Chairman Pane pointed out,

some of the larger industrial complexes have gone through ebb and flow and that has affected the grand list, so I don't have an answer Commissioner in terms of if there is an average or anything else. I think most communities in Connecticut aspire for more economic development for taxes and other reasons.

Chairman Pane: I think that it is not a bad idea, but it's a little unrealistic to think that we have to go up that much just to cover our taxes. I think the statement should also say that we should find efficiencies within our budget and try to improve efficiencies across the board along with grand list development which in order to keep the taxes at a reasonable rate, otherwise we are going to become unaffordable for the Town of Newington. It will become unaffordable for residents.

Glenn Chalder: I think I can figure out a way to make a statement like that Mr. Chairman, I think you are advocating for not having a specific number goal and I think those numbers can present some challenges, so I think if we promote economic development and also efficiencies in municipal government to enhance our fiscal picture, would be a good way to go in the POCD.

Chairman Pane: Basically the Town has to live within its budget because we are 95 percent grown, developed and we have to deal with redevelopment and possible some new development and there is just not enough of that so I think we have to recognize that we have to live within our means.

Any other Commissioner have a question?

Commissioner Braverman: The question is this, are we taking into consideration moving forward on what is happening forward with what is happening with the Covid-19 and the potential revenues and taxes and people working, people being laid off, what are the town's plans to help people that have been laid off that have been out of work and in terms of them paying taxes. They may be impacted.

Chairman Pane: I think we can get into that conversation a little more when we talk about the businesses that we are going to be helping, later in our agenda. We are going to be talking about outdoor restaurant seating and whatever else we can do for some of the small businesses, the retails and things, I don't know if any of that really belong is a POCD. Let's all hope that this virus is over after a year, but

Glenn Chalder: If I may Mr. Chairman, I'm just thinking here that, I think Commissioner Braverman brings up a good point. There are things that happen and changes that occur over time that make us realize that a document can seem dated. The POCD is going to continue to evolve over the next decade and I'm think on page 56 it might make sense to put a sidebar in, and the sidebar would simply say something like, at the time this plan was being prepared the country was experiencing this situation. Newington has been a leader in addressing issues relating to economic development and will strive to address the implications of this going forward. So we don't have specifics because there is conjecture about high unemployment rates but we just don't know yet, but I think at least acknowledging we are going to try to remain flexible should this continue, or change in some way I think would be an important statement in the Plan!

Chairman Pane: Excellent point Glenn, how does that work for Commissioner Braverman and the other Commissioners?

Commissioner Braverman: I'm just concerned about what is going on with the progress that is being proposed. I'm not sure, I don't have a high confidence level. Every day my wife and I walk toward the Berlin Turnpike and where Pier One used to be, they are closed, and the store that was next to it, the curtain place, whatever it was called, that's closed, it's empty. The air conditioners have been torn apart and the guts have been removed, and you want down, and the only thing that is really viable is the Honey Ham place. You know, the rest of that, the whole parking lot is empty.

Commissioner Sobieski: I think the days of the brick and mortar store may be coming to an end, some of the smaller ones like Ann and Hope and Pier One. I think what we need and you might want to find a way I don't know, that we need to take, instead of the huge box stores trying to make smaller ones, for lack of a better word, not a strip mall, I don't like to use that word, but something along that line there that we should look to try to redevelop. I mean, as I said before, the days of big factories and big businesses are coming to an end. You are going to find a few of them here and there, but I think we need to reinvent ourselves on the turnpike and I think what we need to do is get the economic development on board with that and explain what we would like to get done. Just my opinion, but I think you are right, it's not going to go back to the way it was. This Covid-19 virus is.....

Chairman Pane: We don't know that for sure but I agree with you. I agree with Glenn adding something on 56.

Glenn Chalder: I think in terms of Commissioners Braverman and Sobieski, back on page 52 which is in Chapter 8, the discussion about the fact of the Berlin Turnpike is in fact an opportunity area and we discuss this fact that the world is changing, the world of retail is changing, that the area will be ripe for redevelopment consideration. We will prepare for situations to promote appropriate redevelopment. What is that going to be? I'm not sure. It could be smaller stores, could be mixed use with housing, it could be a lot of different things but my hope would be that potential applicants in the future would see this and say to the Commission we are here to try to make visions for the Berlin Turnpike come together and I think with the recommendations in the chapter the Berlin Turnpike area is an area where we could spend some additional time thinking and envisioning as to what type of thing there could be. It's in here, it's just not in the opportunity chapter so I think what I would like to do is, to refer people back to page 52 so that they know that we recognize that.

Chairman Pane: Sounds good Glenn. Any other Commissioners questions, I'd like to have Glenn proceed with the rest of this and move forward.

Glenn Chalder: Page 3, residential development, the question came up at the public hearing back in February, where are the opportunity sites for affordable housing? I think the POCD, the chapter 8 on opportunity sites identifies the areas where transit and utilities could accommodate additional housing and a walkable village type configuration. I think also Craig, have you discussed with the Commission the affordable housing plan considerations?

Craig Minor: No, no I haven't, but I can talk about that later tonight under the Town Planner report.

Glenn Chalder: Okay. I think that Newington is made up of a number of stable neighborhoods in all different parts of the community. So the question is which areas potentially have utilities, infrastructures that might support affordable housing. I think as Commissioner Sobieski pointed out, the road network is one, the transit network is another, utility availability is another so these are areas for consideration for housing options in the future. It doesn't necessarily mean affordable housing, but housing that can meet the housing needs of the community, so they were identified based on transit, utilities, the roadway network, so I'm not sure that any change is necessary in the POCD but the comment was made and I wanted to put this before the Commission for discussion.

Chairman Pane: Okay. Thank you. Any questions?

Commissioner Sobieski: One question Glenn, I know you may not have the answer but do you think with the way that this virus is spreading, that the closeness of the buildings and stuff that this may play into future development.

Glenn Chalder: I think it could. There has been a lot of discussion on the Planner's site this week about possible longer term implications and some of the things that are going on right now. Some of them are almost fantastical in the possibility that they might happen and others seem like they are more probable. So, I think we are going to learn a lot over the next six months to a year if this virus persists, if there is no vaccine or anything else which is available for it. We were talking about, having a conversation with one of our colleagues about whether multi-family development will no longer have elevators and central hall ways, but will be oriented outside, so you will have your own entrance. You don't share the corridors with people. People need different housing at different stages of their life, so I think Newington continuing to have that type of opportunity is important. Exactly how it will play out, I wish I did know, I'd make, like looking into the future for the stock market on that.

Commissioner Sobieski: I was just wondering because I know that the outbreaks in New York were especially high in the high density areas, like apartments and condos and stuff.

Glenn Chalder: I also know that the virus showed up there first.

Commissioner Sobieski: I was just wondering, that's all.

Chairman Pane: The virus spread right up the Connecticut mass transit corridor. Why don't we proceed and get through the next section please?

Glenn Chalder: Item 21, the plan suggests the consideration of a inclusionary housing policy in the future and the comment was made that Newington already has diverse housing stock and we don't need that. Inclusionary housing policy is a policy where the Commission has part any sort of development could require that some consideration be made for (inaudible) whether it be housing which is affordable, or housing meeting different housing needs, etc., so in the plan, on page 66, Item B 1, says consider adopting an inclusionary

zoning requirement, and again, this comment was made. Does the Commission wish to keep that language or modify it?

Chairman Pane: Are there any comments from the Commissioners?

Glenn Chalder: That completes page 3 and we have a page 4, and the comments from the public meeting have to do with pedestrian, bicycle and transit. A Newington resident is actually on the board, statewide board related to this so we have some great input and feedback. I think the plan contains many recommendations supportive of bicycle and transit. I think comment #28, a comment was made that makes sense to support integration of pedestrian, bicycle and transit. I think the comment was raised because the maps which are currently on pages 79, 80 and 81 are separate maps. One is pedestrian, one is bicycle and one is transit and led to the conclusion that we are treating them separately. It was just difficult to make a map that had all of those, so we kind of split it up. A statement in here that we need to think about other modes of transportation and coordinating them I think would make sense. That change is recommended on item #28.

Chairman Pane: I don't have a problem with that. Any other Commissioners have a problem?

Commissioner Sobieski: If Gail is still on, she and I served on a committee years ago trying to get bicycle paths through Newington. I know that I had sent that into the DOT and I think I had sent a copy to Craig too. We had laid out a bike path that you could actually go thru most of the town without getting on a main highway.

Chairman Pane: Do you know where that is?

Commissioner Sobieski: I don't know if Craig has it, or I might still have a copy, Gail may have a copy of it. If I find it I'll forward to Domenic or Craig and he can forward it to you.

Glenn Chalder: If you would Stanley because I think the reason this comment was made is because the bicycle map which is on page 80 of the POCD took advantage of the fact that the state had categorized the state highways, or state numbered roads for suitability and the comment was made, you know, Maple Hill and Church Street for example are local streets but they are actually, or could be suitable for bicycle use, so if the town has other routes which might interconnect, I'd love to include those in the POCD.

Commissioner Sobieski: One of the ones that comes to mind Glenn, I don't want to hold the meeting, was going down Garfield, down Walsh, down to Robbins. That would get you from the center of town to the Robbins area, staying off the busy main road here. From Robbins I think the suggestion was try to reduce one of the lanes up there, if I'm not mistaken. You could also take that and go down Garfield, across Mazzocchi Way, use the cross walk and actually go in through the bicycle path down to Elton Drive and get around that way, get over towards West Hartford without using major roads. They are all back roads. There were a couple of towns that had put up little signs that said bike paths here. Only a thought, I would like to see the town more bike friendly myself.

Chairman Pane: Thank you Commissioner. We have a question from Gail, maybe she can add some information for us.

Gail Budrejko: Just to, yes Stanley and I did talk about this for a while a couple of years ago, but just to let you know you might, I think Parks and Recreation, and this was before Bill DeMaio, did have actually some trails laid out, so historically maybe they have it in their files, and also we had talked about, I actually had them, Newington Bicycle Shop and perhaps the new Trek might have a few. They actually had trails or routes, 5 miles, 10 miles, whatever that they had laid out, so you might want to check with them to see if they have those routes available and that could possibly be incorporated into your map.

Chairman Pane: Thank you very much Gail. Any other comments from the Commissioners? Glenn, why don't you proceed.

Glenn Chalder: Comment number 30, the plan suggests that there is a parking shortage at Cedar Street Fastrack station that perhaps the town would want to coordinate with DOT to alleviate that. The observation was made that the stop is a very valuable amenity to the town and the last thing we want to do is to provide more parking for out of town users. That is a policy change, and should be take that comment out, leave it in, it's the Commission's pleasure.

Chairman Pane: To be successful, it has to provide enough parking there. Commissioner comments? If an opportunity comes on that site, the Newington Junction site, and the timing is right, and we can provide extra parking there, it's not necessarily for out of towners, it could be for in town people.

Glenn Chalder: It doesn't say we are going to do this, it says investigate opportunities to provide more parking as part of support for the Fastrack busway. So I thinks investigate is kind of a softer verb.

Chairman Pane: Absolutely, I don't have a problem with that. Is that all right with all of the other Commissioners?

Commissioner Braverman: I just wanted to add a comment that they use of cars and trucks and everything else, there is a shifting change taking place, and I think we should examine what is happening with transportation a little more closely. I'm not trying to be paranoid about it, but the corona virus, and everything else, I haven't even filled my car in two months. I haven't even traveled that far and if you are looking at the way people commute, I think there is a great impact and I'm not sure how it is going to roll out in the future.

Chairman Pane: We are in uncharted waters right now.

Glenn Chalder: I think Commissioner Braverman brings up an interesting idea, and I would like to put a sidebar in the Chapter on transportation to point out these types of things, that we are going to try to stay on top of those.

Chairman Pane: I like that. Is that all right with you Commissioner Braverman?

Commissioner Braverman: Sure.

Glenn Chalder: I really don't have any more comments. There were some comments in the Implementation Chapter, but they are people encouraging implementation which is what the plan recommends, any change that is necessary.

Chairman Pane: Could we go back to that inclusionary zoning, I don't think we as a Commission gave you an answer on that. So if we could get some input from the Commissioners to give to Glenn so that he could finalize this. Glenn, if you could explain it to the Commissioners one more time.

Glenn Chalder: It's action step E1 and what it says is consider adopting an inclusionary zoning requirement that requires affordable housing component of every new development especially the housing opportunity areas identified in the POCD. This would give the Commission with optical regulation that applies across the board to new development as opposed to (inaudible) to ask for, that they have to provide a percentage of affordable housing.

Chairman Pane: But we could still, on a case by case basis, ask for the same thing?

Glenn Chalder: It gets a little bit harder I think because the Commission can be accused of playing favorites. I think the communities that have done this, Newington, I just checked in the Plan, it's affordable housing percentage right now is 8.58 percent, so if a new development gets built, and it doesn't have affordable housing, Newington falls behind, that 8.58 number starts to go down. If on the other hand we required that each new housing development, we would stay level over time or it could be higher. We're not going to pick the specific outcome, but what the strategy here says is consider adopting an inclusionary zoning requirement, and this could be an effective tool to consider in the future.

Craig Minor: The inclusionary housing could refer to other than just additional affordable housing, for example, you could have a regulation that requires a multi-family proposal to include a certain number of three bedroom apartments to create more family housing, or even senior housing although that probably is not an issue today, but inclusionary housing can be more than just affordable housing.

Glenn Chalder: Yes it can and the section 8.2, the statutory section, 8.2 I think it does refer specifically to affordable, but I agree with you, it could be other things as well.

Chairman Pane: And affordability, our town is aging, so, there could be over 55 or some other type of housing. I have no problem with it because it says basically that we are going to consider it, to look into it in the future. Any other comments from the Commissioners?

Glenn Chalder: Mr. Chairman, the last issue that I have for you tonight is the next step, and I think there are two options available. Number one we can schedule a public hearing for July 15th, or later, and the reason for that timing is that state statutes are requiring a 65 day notice period so that we can notify the regional planning agency and also send it to the Town Council for their comments. The other option would be for me to make these changes I guess either electronically PDF or print out copies for the Commission to look at one more

time, and then schedule the public hearing. I think each time we print the Plan it costs us a couple of hundred bucks so my thought would be, the public hearing is to get thoughts and feedback, and we can always change the Plan based on those comments and feedback, so depending what you perceive as your summer schedule here, we could schedule a public hearing for late July, August, September, it's the Commission's preference.

Chairman Pane: It's a tricky situation with the virus going on right now, we want to, if we don't have to plan it right away, I mean, we would like to see how things proceed because we want to try to have the best turnout possible for this public hearing, so I don't think we need to make the changes again, and add any additional cost, I think we have gone over everything, so I think it's a tentative meeting in July or August for a public hearing and hopefully we will be able to do it in person.

Glenn Chalder: Craig, do you know what our OPM date is, off the top of your head?

Chairman Pane: I would imagine that all of that is going to get extended too, they're not going to penalize us because of the virus for any dates.

Glenn Chalder: Playing hard ball a little bit, but the issue is, our OPM date is June 9, 2020, the executive order from the Governor has given us ninety days and all restrictions are going to be released by June 9, 202 so I think we get an automatic 90 which would put us into September. I think Mr. Chairman, if the Commission was comfortable heading into July, we could keep the hearing open, get additional input, and not have any kind of conflict with the State.

Chairman Pane: Let's set something towards the end of July and I'd like to keep this on the agenda in case the public has any questions between now and then. We can keep it on our agenda. What do you think about that Craig?

Craig Minor: We can do that.

Glenn Chalder: The only thing I might add Mr. Chairman, if that happens, if there are additional comments that come in, if you could keep the separate. The statutes require the 65 day notice period for CCROG and for the Council and if either one of them senses there is a separate packet out there that doesn't reflect what they are reviewing, it creates some challenges, so as long as we keep those comments separately so all of the appropriate process would be fine.

Chairman Pane: Okay, do you have that down Craig?

Craig Minor: Yes. I understand.

Glenn Chalder: I'll work with Craig to get the date worked out, I'll modify the Plan, enjoy the rest of your spring and summer and I will see you in July.

Chairman Pane: Let me just see if there is any other Commissioners that have any questions for you Glenn. Any Commissioners have any questions. Thank you very much for all of your hard work. I really appreciate it.

X. OLD BUSINESS

None

XI. PETITIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULING

- a. Petition 16-20: Special Permit (Sec. 6.11 Service, Sale, Repair, Rental or Storage of Motor Vehicles) for a Gas Station/Convenience Store at 4 Hartford Avenue. Dlyala LLC Applicant; Newington Gas Distributors LLC, Owner, Jawa Shalo, 3 Bucks Crossing, Cromwell CT, Contact

Craig Minor: This is an application for a convenience store/gas station on the corner of Main Street and Hartford Avenue. The plans, we have the plans, but because it does require a special permit, I'm recommending that the hearing for the special permit be scheduled for the next meeting. We can review the plans at that meeting also.

Chairman Pane: Okay, any comments or questions from the Commissioners?

Commissioner Sobieski: Quick question Craig, the plans, will they address any contamination left over from the old location?

Craig Minor: What I can do is tell the applicant's consulting engineer to be prepared to address that comment when he comes to the hearing.

Commissioner Sobieski: I believe DEEP still has a deep well over there that they monitor periodically. I'm not sure, they were doing it up to a couple of years ago, I don't know if they still are or not.

Commissioner Braverman: Is that the old Gulf Station?

Commissioner Sobieski: No, it's the old, yeah, it was Gulf, it was Amaco, it was CITCO, it was Ron's old gas station, the corner of Hartford Avenue and Main.

Chairman Pane: Craig, this was already a gas station/convenience, correct?

Craig Minor: I don't know if the previous.....

Commissioner Sobieski: No....

Craig Minor:if the previous location was a convenience store. It was torn down before I got here.

Commissioner Sobieski: No, it was just a gas station.

Chairman Pane: So my question is, why does it have to go for a public hearing, special permit if it was already an approved use.

Craig Minor: That's a good question. I would say that if for some reason TPZ ended denying them their special permit, they might have a legal argument in the courts that the owner of the property never intended to abandon the gasoline use. I think that would be an easy thing to prove, but the process, the public process is a really good way to vet all of the unique issues at that location. That is your opportunity to require a condition of approval such as they install sidewalks, which the regulations don't require, but with the special permit process gives you the ability to require things that you wouldn't otherwise be able to require. A public hearing is always in the public interest.

Chairman Pane: Okay, thank you. Technically though it doesn't need a special permit, but it probably should have been a site plan, but we are getting public comment through the special permit process in order to protect the residents the best we can, basically.

Craig Minor: Yes, and there will be a site plan approval also.

Chairman Pane: But we would probably be hard fetched to deny anything over there because it was an existing facility, correct?

Craig Minor: Agreed.

XII. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Chairman Pane: This will talk about the staff approval of outdoor restaurant seating. As the Commissioners know, I instructed the Town Planner to try to work with the restaurants or any other businesses. To date, we have a few businesses that are in need of expanding their outside area. T.J's on Cedar, Ruth Chris, and I believe Joey Garlic, and there might be a few additional ones. The biggest concern I believe from all of the Commissioners, our Planner and all of our staff, and before I go into that, I have to tell you, the staff in Newington are outstanding. They have really come together, I commend the Town Planner and the Highway Department and everybody. The biggest problem is making sure that there is safety there. I know that is everybody's concern, so these sites are getting inspected by I believe the Building Department, Fire Marshal and other staff and they have determined that some of these spots are going to need protection from vehicles, possibly going into the tent or into the sitting area which is completely understandable.

The Town has stepped up, I talked to the Highway Department and they are checking their inventory and they are going to provide some blocking or jersey barriers depending on how many they have, so they are going to start providing those for certain restaurants, whether it is on town owned land or even private property, and if the town runs out of these blocks, then I've worked out where I will purchase blocks for whatever businesses that need them, and Mike Camillo has donated his transportation so that he can pick them up from Tilcon and the Highway Department has agreed to run the loader over there so that we can take them and put them in place. So, by protecting the residents in this manner, by protecting the customers in this manner, and they also have to go through the Health Department and a few other things. We're not asking them to pay any fees, we're doing everything informally through the Planner and I have asked the Planner to keep all of the Commissioners informed as we proceed with these things, so I'll ask the Planner to give us a report on anything that I might have missed.

Craig Minor: I think you covered everything important Mr. Chairman. I sent a memo to the Commissioners this afternoon which is displayed on your screen right now, which goes into a little more detail over the Executive Order that was issued by the Governor. Giving a lot more detail to how we will process these requests for outdoor restaurant seating.

Newington is kind of lucky that it's regulations already allow outdoor seating. The only tweak that we had to accommodate is that the rules require the Commission to approve them. The Governor has overruled that and said staff will approve these, but you, the Newington Commission has already decided to do that, so we are actually a step ahead of the Governor here.

If you see the memo, as I say, under the Governor's Executive order applications can be informal and they need to be acted upon within ten days which should be plenty of time in most cases. If we don't act on them in ten days they are assumed to be approved, just like subdivisions. If we need additional information, we can request it, but we certainly are not going to ask for more information than we absolutely need. All we really need is a sketch, to scale, and just a paragraph or two explaining what they want to do. I have talked to the Health, Charles Brown, the Health Commissioner, and he has asked to be kept in the loop, which the executive order seemed to overlook which I thought was a little odd, but Charles Brown asked to be kept informed, which I am doing. If there is a tent involved, then the Fire Marshal will be involved also, so we are moving ahead very quickly. Since I last spoke to you Chairman Pane, I have gotten a request from TGIFriday and just got another one.

Chairman Pane: DiBella's, did they call you?

Craig Minor: No, they have not called me yet, but I'm expecting their call. Chairman Pane, you had asked me to put something on the web site, I have something for the town web site.

Chairman Pane: I think the most difficult thing is communicating to these businesses that the Town of Newington is trying to do anything possible to help them. The tent that they are getting, the chairs and tables they are providing, we are providing the inspections and, but the protection, the bollards or the concrete blocks, that would be an extremely difficult thing for the businesses to come up with, so I'm very pleased that Town staff and Mike Camillo are helping with this.

Are there any Commissioner questions or comments? There was one other thing I want to let you know that TJ's on Cedar asked to extend their hours. I don't have a problem with that. They want to extend their hours from 8 o'clock to 10 o'clock at night. Is that correct Craig?

Craig Minor: The Executive Order says that these uses cannot go past midnight, so this is consistent with that.

Chairman Pane: On that item, TJ's on Cedar, if any of the Commissioners have any comments for the extended hours for him?

Commissioner Sobieski: I think it's a good idea.

Commissioner Braverman: Not a problem

Chairman Pane: If there are no objections, are there any questions or comments on the whole restaurant situation.

Commissioner Sobieski: There is a product, what they call plastic jersey out there, K-rail, it's light weight, you can fill it with water and then drain it, might be a good idea to see if we can get any state funds to buy some of those and they would be a lot easier to maintain than the concrete blocks. Just a thought.

Chairman Pane: Those aren't cheap either, and we're trying to do everything on the cheap, we're using existing stock. We have some jersey barriers that the town owns and we also have some concrete blocks and they are going to use what stock they have, and then we'll pick up some additional stuff.

Commissioner Sobieski: You might want to see if there is any jersey barrier left over at Brook Street in Rocky Hill.

Chairman Pane: We can have Craig check on that and we can also check with Parks and Rec and see if they have anything in inventory that we could use.

Bryan Haggerty: I was just going to say that anything we can do, we should do to help out the Town and the businesses. That would be my only comment, whatever we can, we should be able to take care of.

Chairman Pane: Absolutely. The biggest thing is trying to communicate this to the restaurants and businesses too, and retailers. If any of the Commissioners run into businesses that need help, retail, restaurants, anything, send them over to the Town Planner, and he would be happy to take care of them.

Commissioner Lenares: Just a couple things, like Bryan just said, anything that we can do, we need to do, but also you had mentioned the task of having these businesses be aware that the town is willing and available to help. This is temporary, and we want to get back to normal. New normals will take place, and I think there will be efficiencies within the businesses themselves, not from our purview, but going forward they need to know that this is temporary and to accommodate them, and Newington setting the standard in doing such great things to accommodate them, but at some point, if going forward, they want to increase, or keep it as permanent, then they need to come back to the Commission and get permission to do so.

Chairman Pane: Very well said, Commission, thank you very much.

Craig Minor: I want to address the issue that Commissioner Lenares raised about how long these permits would be good for. The first one that we issued for Ruth Chris, as I was drafting it, I thought about this, and I started to give them ninety days, three months, which would go to the middle of June, and then, no, we are definitely still going to be in the throes of this in June, so I better bump it up to November. Six months. Now, I don't know if anyone is going to be eating outdoors in November, so that may be more than enough. The idea of having an end date was very much in my mind. I haven't issued another one

since then, I'm not sure, I'll ask the Commissioners, what do you think? What would you like the end date to be?

Chairman Pane: I think you covered it there, I don't think, I think you are correct, I don't think anybody is going go that far into the season with outside eating, but at least you have some flexibility. Commissioners, any questions?

Commissioner Fox: Commissioner Lenares had said something about, the business owners should be their own advocates, and I think that is a definite yes because with people still nervous over the outbreak and with deaths still occurring, and a lot of hospitalizations, even though that is coming down, they might not feel safe even sitting outside, so I think between the business community, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Town and this Commission I think it behooves us to maybe do some community outreach in one way or another to make sure that people feel safe and that they know just because we are expediting these applications doesn't mean that we are being frivolous and just approving them right off the top of our head. Thank you.

Commissioner Sobieski: Chairman Pane, I had an in depth conversation with you and I think it's a great idea and we have to make sure our restaurants come back, we have to relax the rules a little bit until this pandemic is over. You're right, I don't think anyone is going to be eating outside in November but you never know. I am in favor of what Dave said, and I think that is what we need to do is reach out to them if necessary, let them know that we are here, let them know this is on a temporary basis until this clears up, and if they wish to make it permanent, they have to come back, but I think we need to do whatever we need to do to get moving.

Chairman Pane: Commissioner Lenares, you have a question?

Commissioner Lenares: Yes, just to reiterate again, in terms of outreach and whatnot, just so the public knows that, I mean, there is no outreach in terms of favoritism, we're only expediting applications that have come from the businesses to the Commission, to the Planner and I think having that done in that way I think is the fairest way to do it. The Planner has an excellent concept of having a temporary (inaudible) in place. Obviously I think having outdoor seating in November could be a little risky, but that's on them, but anything that the businesses want when they, the businesses come forward to the Commission, thru the Planner, to the Town. We're there with open arms helping them in any way we could. If some businesses choose not to, that is their own purview as well, let them make their own decisions. If they choose to we're there, we're staffed and we're competent in doing so and have a plan in place, and I think that's the most important thing going forward.

Chairman Pane: I agree, they are not all going to open up at the same time, everybody has different circumstances. There are some employees making more money now being unemployed and they might not go back to work, so there are some businesses that are experiencing that problem. Everybody, it's going to be a slow process getting everybody back but whatever we can do to help these businesses is a plus. So Craig, any business that comes in, any restaurant, that is going to need protection to protect the customers with

their tent or seating area, please let them know that the town, in one way or the other will provide that or them. We'll continue, Craig and I will continue with what we are doing and I will have the Planner update all of the Commissioners as we proceed with this so you are well informed. Any other Commissioner comments or questions?

Commissioner Fox: I think that it bears mentioning again that the staff, the town Planner and others should, actually, I don't know if you have or not Craig, but actually you should be reaching out to the business people, not visa versa. I mean, they can be calling to see, what are you going to do, what are you going to do, and I think you can preclude that by letting them know what we are going to do. As far as keeping us notified Mr. Chair, I would hope so and I would hope that maybe if there is a little confusion, should we do this, should we do that, that a quick e-mail to get some opinions might be in order, otherwise just keep going what we are doing.

Chairman Pane: One of the biggest concern was getting the message out so that is why, I have reached out to some of the businesses and I have asked Craig to send an e-mail to Economic Development. If any of the Commissioners know of a business owner in town or drives by a restaurant or happens to see another business that is in trouble, please have them reach out to the Planner.

The Planner and all of the Newington staff are doing an unbelievable job keeping these businesses going and making it as efficient as possible.

Craig Minor: The Chairman mentioned how we had reached out, at the Chairman's suggestion to the EDC, and I have also reached out to the Chamber of Commerce, again at the Chairman's suggestion to let them know that we are available for any help that is needed.

Chairman Pane: Thank you. Any other questions or comments? Is there anything else in your report Craig?

Craig Minor: In my report I gave people an update on where you are with a couple of upcoming amendments, but we don't need to discuss them unless someone has a question.

Chairman Pane: Have you heard anything from that development where we returned the bond to them, over on Deming?

Craig Minor: Oh right, no, I did hear from one of the residents there the other day in connection with the Peckham Farms subdivision, but no, I haven't heard anything about, no that is not quite true, I got a call actually a few weeks ago from the original developer who was calling to ask and he was a little vague, but I think what he was asking was, are we going to give him a hard time about obtaining building permits, at least that is what I think he was saying, I said, no, you are just like any other property owner. If you apply for a permit, your taxes are current, no Planning and Zoning, we don't have any issue with you putting houses on the three parcels that you own.

Chairman Pane: I understand that, and it's basically now the responsibility of the association to finish the specifications on the road, come back to us about the sidewalk, and finish any wetlands or draining or grading over there because they received all of the funds.

Maybe we could get an update from them for our next meeting. Any comments on this meeting and how this proceeded? It seems to be a tremendously better than the situation that we had previously. I want to thank the IT, and James, like I said, all of the Town staff I commend you for the job that you have been doing.

Commissioner Sobieski: I have a question for Craig, these upcoming subdivision and zoning amendments, are they going to be published so we can see what they are?

Craig Minor: They were sent previously, but I will certainly send them out again tomorrow and they will be in your packet and on the town web site. I will send another copy to everybody tomorrow.

Commissioner Gill: I just wanted to go back to the restaurants with Craig, possibly if we could just have a one page e-mail as to who has requested because I know that Rooster Company has sent paper work in, so I want to make sure as we talked to these people we know that it is in the system.

Chairman Pane: You are correct Tom, Rooster is one of them that we are talking with. I forgot to mention it, they are going to, they would like to take about ten parking spaces that are in the rear of their business, it's owned by the Town, the Town manager has given permission, and that is where we are going to put some jersey barriers to protect the people and I believe they are going to put up a tent up and tables inside and they still have their to-go area too. I think it's important for the restaurants to continue with their delivery services, their take out, their curb side and then by adding this outside seating area, it gives them a shot to bring in some extra income. I hope that answers your question Tom, and yes Craig, the Town Planner will keep all of the Commissioners updated on every restaurant that comes in and he will give you the details on it, and then if you have any questions or concerns all you have to do is get back to us.

Commissioner Gill: Okay, thank you very much.

XIII. COMMUNICATIONS

None

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (For items not listed on the agenda; speakers limited to two minutes)

None

XV. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Sobieski: I just got an update from CCROG just before the meeting, I will send it out, tomorrow morning to everybody.

Chairman Pane: Thank you very much. Any other questions?

Commissioner Haggerty: Going back to when we were going over the POCD I would think the whole virus thing has totally turned our world upside down, and inside out, and not to get too medical about it, I don't think anything is changing in the foreseeable future, day or weeks or months from now you never know what is going to happen. This thing could just go away, there could be a vaccine, so I think we should be pro-active and be planning, but I'm not, I would be leary about being too concerned years down the road about making TPZ decisions based upon this virus. That's all.

Chairman Pane: I agree with you, excellent points. I appreciate your comments. Comments from anybody else?

XVI. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Pane: I want to thank everybody. I think this worked out well. Is there a time in the future, the near future Craig that we will be able to have live meetings, at what time? Will we be able to space ourselves in, or will this continue for now? What's your opinion?

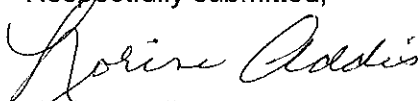
Craig Minor: I don't have any insight into this any more than anyone else, I am assuming that it is going to be like this for at least a couple more months.

Chairman Pane: I think this meeting worked a lot better for the Commissioners, I would hope, I think hearing it and being able to see people made the Commissioners more comfortable, and we will continue with this process, and I want to thank James and our IT people, Paul and our Town Manager and all of staff, and you Craig because you are doing an excellent job. And everybody please stay safe and follow the procedures so that you are safe and everybody else is safe. If you see a business out there in Newington that might need help or has requested something, please send them to Craig and we will do whatever we can to help.

XVII. ADJOURN

Commissioner Sobieski moved to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Braverman.

Respectfully submitted,



Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary